

Recreational Path Committee

2016 Fiscal Year End Report

November 23, 2016

Status

Progress continues to be made on the Georgetown 4.5 mile recreational path. The trail is a part of the 30 mile Border to Boston trail that will run from Danvers north through Wenham, Topsfield, Boxford, Georgetown, Newbury, Newburyport, and Salisbury. The Border to Boston trail is part of the East Coast Greenway that runs from eastern Maine to Key West Florida. The Danvers, Wenham, Topsfield, Newburyport, and Salisbury sections are in use and portions of the Georgetown trail are available for use.

More walkers and cyclists continue to use the trail despite the bridges that need repair and sections that are still impassable. The High School cross-country team has found it to be an excellent training ground. The sections that are available are a wonderful addition to the town's recreational options and you can meet members of the community making use of the trail.

Mowing and trimming was scheduled to be handed off to the Highway Department in 2016 under the supervision of the Park and Rec Commission. The Highway Department was not ready to take this work on so it continues to be done in authorized areas by the committee.

The projects to design the trail are managed by Mass DOT, project # 607541 south of Andover St., and Project # 607542 north of Andover St. Last year we finalized construction funding for both projects and they were scheduled to be constructed in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Due to changes in priority of regional highway projects, the funding has been rescheduled now to happen in 2019 and 2020.

Accomplishments

The following is the timeline of key activities and accomplishments for FY 2016.

- An informational meeting was held at Town Hall by the state project team for the southern part of the trail to provide an update to residents on May 10th.
- National Grid conducted a survey of wire height above the right-of-way and signed-off that there is sufficient height for use of the trail.
- To accept the southern part of the trail as a project, the trail needs to have a terminus with public access and parking. The project team and RecPath Committee walked the trail in April and agreed that it would extend into Boxford to Georgetown Road. Boxford is not ready for construction south of Georgetown Road and agreed to have our trail extend to that point.

Committee

The FY 2016 members of the committee are Jeffrey Wade (chair), Bill Hastings, Chris Roop, Sandy Martin and Julie Coolidge.

Next Steps

- 25% Design Public Hearing by MDOT

- Determine plan for interim repair and opening of bridges
- Develop “Friends of the Trail” and additional community engagement
- Environmental permitting and completion of design
- Finalization of the National Grid lease following 75% design